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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA – WESTERN DIVISION

VLADIMIR ROYTER,

Plaintiff,

vs.

COSTCO WHOLESALE
CORPORATION and DOES 1 to 50,

Defendant(s).

Case No. 2:24-cv-06484-FLA-PVCx

**STIPULATED PROTECTIVE
ORDER**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

Discovery in this action may involve production of confidential, proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be warranted.

Accordingly, the Parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. The Parties acknowledge that this Order does not confer blanket protections on all disclosures or responses to discovery and that the protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends only to the limited

1 information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment under the applicable legal
2 principles. The Parties further acknowledge, as set forth in Section 12.3 below, that this
3 Order does not entitle them to file Confidential Information under seal; Civil Local Rule
4 79-5 sets forth the procedures that must be followed and the standards that will be
5 applied when a Party seeks permission from the Court to file material under seal.

6 **1.2 GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT**

7 This action arises from alleged injuries sustained by Plaintiff VLADIMIR
8 ROYTER (“Vladimir”) due to an incident in a Costco retail store. Vladimir was
9 attempting to move a box containing a mattress when he tore his biceps tendon.
10 Vladimir alleges negligence and premises liability causes of action.

11 Evidence or potential evidence that will be disclosed in discovery is expected to
12 include confidential and proprietary information and documents regarding business
13 practices pertaining to safety, products sold in Costco, and other matters which are
14 generally unavailable to the public and could be exploited by actors (e.g. criminals and
15 scammers) who have no interest in or need for evidence produced in this case for their
16 own unlawful purposes. Likewise, evidence shall include surveillance footage which is
17 also generally unavailable to the public. This footage invokes the same concerns as the
18 other information discussed above, and potentially implicates third party privacy
19 concerns as well.

20 Accordingly, to expedite the flow of information, to facilitate the prompt
21 resolution of disputes over confidentiality of discovery materials, to adequately protect
22 information the parties are entitled to keep confidential, to ensure that the parties are
23 permitted reasonable necessary uses of such material in preparation for and in the
24 conduct of trial, to address their handling at the end of the litigation, and serve the ends
25 of justice, a protective order for such information is justified in this matter. It is the
26 intent of the parties that information will not be designated as confidential for tactical
27 reasons and that nothing be so designated without a good faith belief that it has been
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maintained in a confidential, non-public manner, and there is good cause why it should not be part of the public record of this case.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Action: This pending federal lawsuit, which originated in the Superior Court of the State of California and was removed to Federal Court by Defendant COSTCO WHOLESALE CORPORATION (“Defendant” or “Costco”) on diversity jurisdiction grounds.

2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Nonparty that challenges the designation of information or items under this Order.

2.3 “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items: information (regardless of how it is generated, stored, or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c) and as specified above in the Good Cause Statement.

2.4 Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as their support staff).

2.5 Designating Party: a Party or Nonparty that designates information or items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

2.6 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including, among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced or generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

2.7 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as an expert witness or as a consultant in this action.

2.8 House Counsel: attorneys who are employees of a Party to this Action. House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside counsel.

2.9 Nonparty: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

1 2.10 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a Party to
2 this Action but are retained to represent or advise a Party and have appeared in this
3 Action on behalf of that Party or are affiliated with a law firm that has appeared on
4 behalf of that Party, including support staff.

5 2.11 Party: any Party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors,
6 employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their
7 support staffs).

8 2.12 Producing Party: a Party or Nonparty that produces Disclosure or Discovery
9 Material in this Action.

10 2.13 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation support
11 services (for example, photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or
12 demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium) and
13 their employees and subcontractors.

14 2.14 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is designated
15 as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

16 2.15 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material from
17 a Producing Party.

18 3. SCOPE

19 The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only Protected
20 Material (as defined above) but also any information copied or extracted from Protected
21 Material; all copies, excerpts, summaries, or compilations of Protected Material; and any
22 testimony, conversations, or presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal
23 Protected Material.

24 Any use of Protected Material at trial will be governed by the orders of the trial
25 judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at trial.

26 4. DURATION

27 Once a case proceeds to trial, all the information that was designated as
28 confidential or maintained under this Order becomes public and will be presumptively

1 available to all members of the public, including the press, unless the trial judge finds
2 compelling reasons to proceed otherwise. See *Kamakana v. City & Cnty. of Honolulu*,
3 447 F.3d 1172, 1180-81 (9th Cir. 2006) (distinguishing “good cause” showing for
4 sealing documents produced in discovery from “compelling reasons” needed for merits-
5 related documents). Accordingly, the terms of this Order do not extend beyond the
6 beginning of trial unless the trial judge Orders otherwise.

7 Even after final disposition of this litigation, the confidentiality obligations
8 imposed by this Order will remain in effect until a Designating Party agrees otherwise in
9 writing or a court order otherwise directs. Final disposition is the later of (1) dismissal of
10 all claims and defenses in this Action, with or without prejudice, or (2) final judgment
11 after the completion and exhaustion of all appeals, rehearings, remands, trials, or reviews
12 of this Action, including the time limits for filing any motions or applications for
13 extension of time under applicable law.

14 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

15 5.1 Each Party or Nonparty that designates information or items for protection
16 under this Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that
17 qualifies under the appropriate standards. To the extent practicable, the Designating
18 Party must designate for protection only those parts of material, documents, items, or
19 oral or written communications that qualify so that other portions of the material,
20 documents, items, or communications for which protection is not warranted are not
21 swept unjustifiably within the ambit of this Order.

22 Indiscriminate or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations that are
23 shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper purpose (for
24 example, to unnecessarily encumber the case-development process or to impose
25 unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Designating Party to
26 sanctions.

27 If it comes to a Designating Party’s attention that information or items it
28 designated for protection do not qualify for that level of protection, that Designating

1 Party must promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable
2 designation.

3 5.2 Except as otherwise provided in this Order, Disclosure or Discovery Material
4 that qualifies for protection under this Order must be clearly so designated before the
5 material is disclosed or produced.

6 Designation in conformity with this Order requires the following:

7 (a) for information in documentary form (for example, paper or electronic
8 documents but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial proceedings),
9 the Producing Party must affix at a minimum the legend “CONFIDENTIAL” to each
10 page that contains Protected Material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a
11 page qualify for protection, the Producing Party should to the extent practicable clearly
12 identify the protected portion(s) (for example, by making appropriate markings in the
13 margins).

14 A Party or Nonparty that makes original documents available for inspection need
15 not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has indicated which
16 documents it would like copied and produced. During the inspection and before the
17 designation, all material made available for inspection must be treated as
18 “CONFIDENTIAL.” After the inspecting Party has identified the documents it wants
19 copied and produced, the Producing Party must determine which documents, or portions
20 thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then, before producing the specified
21 documents, the Producing Party must affix the “CONFIDENTIAL” legend to each page
22 that contains Protected Material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page
23 qualify for protection, the Producing Party should to the extent practical clearly identify
24 the protected portion(s) (for example, by making appropriate markings in the margins).

25 (b) for testimony given in depositions, the Designating Party must identify the
26 Disclosure or Discovery Material that is protected on the record, before the close of the
27 deposition.
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(c) for information produced in some form other than documentary and for any other tangible items, the Producing Party must affix in a prominent place on the exterior of the container or containers in which the information is stored the legend “CONFIDENTIAL.” If only a portion or portions of the information warrant protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, must identify the protected portion(s).

5.3 If timely corrected, an inadvertent failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive the Designating Party’s right to secure protection under this Order for that material. On timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this Order.

6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

6.1 Any Party or Nonparty may challenge a designation of confidentiality at any time consistent with the Court’s scheduling order.

6.2 The Challenging Party must initiate the dispute-resolution process (and, if necessary, file a discovery motion) under Local Rule 37.

6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such proceeding is on the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper purpose (for example, to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties), may expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating Party has waived or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties must continue to afford the material in question the level of protection to which it is entitled under the Producing Party’s designation until the Court rules on the challenge.

7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

7.1 A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Nonparty in connection with this Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action. Such Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of people and under the conditions described in this Order. When

1 the Action has been terminated, a Receiving Party must comply with the provisions of
2 Section 13 below (FINAL DISPOSITION).

3 Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a
4 location and in a manner sufficiently secure to ensure that access is limited to the people
5 authorized under this Order.

6 7.2 Unless otherwise ordered by the Court or permitted in writing by the
7 Designating Party, a Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated
8 “CONFIDENTIAL” only to the following people:

9 (a) the Receiving Party’s Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, as well as
10 employees of that Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably necessary to
11 disclose the information for this Action;

12 (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) of the
13 Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action;

14 (c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is
15 reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and
16 Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

17 (d) the Court and its personnel;

18 (e) court reporters and their staff;

19 (f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional Vendors to
20 whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the
21 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

22 (g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a custodian
23 or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information;

24 (h) during their depositions, witnesses and attorneys for witnesses to whom
25 disclosure is reasonably necessary, provided that the deposing party requests that the
26 witness sign the form attached as Exhibit A hereto and the witnesses will not be
27 permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign the form, unless
28 otherwise agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the Court. Pages of transcribed

deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material may be separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except as permitted under this Order; and

(i) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel, mutually agreed on by any of the Parties engaged in settlement discussions or appointed by the Court.

8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED IN OTHER LITIGATION

If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must

(a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification must include a copy of the subpoena or court order unless prohibited by law;

(b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification must include a copy of this Order; and

(c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued by the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected. If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with the subpoena or court order should not produce any information designated in this action as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination on the protective-order request by the relevant court unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s permission. The Designating Party bears the burden and expense of seeking protection of its Confidential Material, and nothing in these provisions should be construed as authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action to disobey a lawful directive from another court.

1 9. A NONPARTY’S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE
2 PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION

3 (a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a Nonparty
4 in this Action and designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.” Such information is protected by
5 the remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be
6 construed as prohibiting a Nonparty from seeking additional protections.

7 (b) In the event that a Party is required by a valid discovery request to produce a
8 Nonparty’s Confidential Information in its possession and the Party is subject to an
9 agreement with the Nonparty not to produce the Nonparty’s Confidential Information,
10 then the Party must

11 (1) promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Nonparty
12 that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality
13 agreement with a Nonparty;

14 (2) promptly provide the Nonparty with a copy of this Order, the
15 relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably specific description of the
16 information requested; and

17 (3) make the information requested available for inspection by the
18 Nonparty, if requested.

19 (c) If the Nonparty fails to seek a protective order within 21 days of receiving the
20 notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party may produce the Nonparty’s
21 Confidential Information responsive to the discovery request. If the Nonparty timely
22 seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party must not produce any information in its
23 possession or control that is subject to the confidentiality agreement with the Nonparty
24 before a ruling on the protective-order request. Absent a court order to the contrary, the
25 Nonparty must bear the burden and expense of seeking protection of its Protected
26 Material.

1 10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

2 If a Receiving Party learns that by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed
3 Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this Order,
4 the Receiving Party must immediately notify the Designating Party in writing of the
5 unauthorized disclosures, use its best efforts to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the
6 Protected Material, inform the person or people to whom unauthorized disclosures were
7 made of the terms of this Order, and ask that person or people to execute the
8 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

9 11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE
10 PROTECTED MATERIAL

11 When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain
12 inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection, the
13 obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil
14 Procedure 26(b)(5)(B).

15 12. MISCELLANEOUS

16 12.1 Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any person to seek its
17 modification by the Court.

18 12.2 By stipulating to the entry of this Order, no Party waives any right it
19 otherwise would have to object to disclosing or producing any information or item on
20 any ground not addressed in this Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on
21 any ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Order.

22 12.3 A Party that seeks to file under seal any Protected Material must comply with
23 Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material may be filed under seal only pursuant to a
24 court order authorizing the sealing of the specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's
25 request to file Protected Material under seal is denied, then the Receiving Party may file
26 the information in the public record unless otherwise instructed by the Court.

13. FINAL DISPOSITION

After the final disposition of this Action, as defined in paragraph 4, within 60 days of a written request by the Designating Party, each Receiving Party must return all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in this subdivision, “all Protected Material” includes all copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same person or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 60-day deadline that identifies (by category, when appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or destroyed and affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries, or any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled to retain an archival copy of all pleadings; motion papers; trial, deposition, and hearing transcripts; legal memoranda; correspondence; deposition and trial exhibits; expert reports; attorney work product; and consultant and expert work product even if such materials contain Protected Material. Any such archival copies that contain or constitute Protected Material remain subject to this Order as set forth in Section 4 (DURATION).

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1 14. SANCTIONS

2 Any willful violation of this Order may be punished by civil or criminal contempt,
3 financial or evidentiary sanctions, reference to disciplinary authorities, or other
4 appropriate action at the discretion of the Court.

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6 **FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN BY THE PARTIES' STIPULATION, IT IS SO**
7 **ORDERED.**

8
9 DATED: September 19, 2024



10 _____
11 HON. PEDRO V. CASTILLO
12 United States Magistrate Judge

EXHIBIT A

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

I, _____ [full name], of _____ [full address], declare under penalty of perjury that I have read in its entirety and understand the Stipulated Protective Order that was issued by the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California on _____ [date] in the case of *Vladimir Royter and Larisa Royter v. Costco Wholesale Corporation*, Case No.: 2:24-cv-06484-FLA-PVC. I agree to comply with and to be bound by all terms of this Stipulated Protective Order, and I understand and acknowledge that failure to so comply could expose me to sanctions and punishment, including contempt. I solemnly promise that I will not disclose in any manner any information or item that is subject to this Stipulated Protective Order to any person or entity except in strict compliance with the provisions of this Order.

I further agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order, even if such enforcement proceedings occur after termination of this action. I hereby appoint _____ [full name] of _____ [full address and telephone number] as my California agent for service of process in connection with this action or any proceedings related to enforcement of this Stipulated Protective Order.

Date: _____

City and State where signed: _____

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____